

**Submission:** The 2015 UFI Sustainable Development Awards

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**To:** Mr Christian Druart

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## **UFI Sustainable Development Award Innovative Cost-saving in the value chain**

### **Scope and Background**

For the past 12 years, the Cape Town International Convention Centre has prided itself on creating extraordinary experiences. The centre's core values of passion, integrity, innovation and excellence guide the centre's own ambition to be a leading conference and exhibition destination worldwide. In addition, the centre has committed to a robust sustainability strategy in order to minimise its own environmental impact and maximise its social impact.

In order to commit fully to sustainability, the CTICC has prioritised the triple bottom line: economic, environmental, as well as social sustainability. In doing so, the centre has come up with innovative solutions which minimise environmental impacts, whilst also saving costs and engaging with all stakeholders.

An area in sustainability which engages the entire value-chain is waste management. Despite the fact that events and exhibitions usually generate a large amount of waste, South Africa has few municipal recycling programmes, and most cities are only slowly starting to have appropriate infrastructure for large-scale recycling projects. Taking this context into account, the CTICC identified waste as one of its main focus areas in 2011, as part of a broader sustainability strategy that included both environmental and social targets.

The Nurture Our World (NOW) team, who are responsible for the overall sustainability strategy, set goals to minimise waste to landfill and increase recycling. Due to the various stakeholders involved in waste processes, the NOW team decided to develop a multi-faceted approach which integrated the entire value-chain. Three years later, the CTICC has managed to divert a significant amount of waste from landfill, as well as create time and cost savings. This has taken place in a context where recycling rarely takes place, and where job creation is of chief importance.

### **Detailed Actions/Solutions**

Due to the nature of its business in the exhibition and events industry, responsible waste management and reduction is key to the CTICC's sustainability strategy. However, waste management during large events and exhibitions can be complex, particularly in a country where recycling is a relatively new practise that still requires appropriate infrastructure. The centre thus realised that it needed to adopt measures for each step of the value chain: from procurement, to patrons, to the facilities staff, to waste service providers, as well as to clients, in order to take on the challenge.

At first, the centre concentrated on simple strategies to divert waste from landfill: implementing a recycling system and reviewing the centre's own procurement, eliminating excess waste through procuring compostable and re-usable packaging and encouraging clients to do the same. A formal recycling system was implemented in 2011 which separated waste both front and back of house and made provisions for dry

recyclables as well as landfill waste. In order to do this, a private waste contractor was employed.

However, the centre realised the need to engage with various parts of the value-chain in order to fully maximise its own waste system. Pairing up with its in-house service providers (cleaning service and waste disposal companies), the CTICC created the Waste Champions Team at the end of 2013. The objective of this group was to have the relevant people from across the entire waste process together on a frequent basis to discuss waste challenges and achievements and also to iron out any difficulties and information in the system. As a result of this team, which is headed up by the Events Services Manager, several successful waste initiatives at the CTICC have been implemented and improved.

The first of the improvements facilitated by the Waste Champions Team was the refining of the waste management system as a whole. After an evaluation of the waste statistics, it was decided to implement a composting system to deal with the centre's unusable food waste (food which is unopened is donated to the CTICC's community partner or another suitable organisation in need). This was implemented in 2013, again through a private contractor. The centre thus had three waste streams: recycling, non-recycling, and food/organic waste.

The move from a two bin to a three bin system involved various system changes necessary for engaging people both front and back of house. A colour-coding system was rolled out front of house that helped patrons, as well back of house that helped facilities and cleaning staff, identify which bins were correct for which types of waste. This was colour-coded and had detailed explanations of what needed to go in each bin and what should be avoided (see pictures at end of this document). Along with this, Waste Stream posters were developed in order to explain the system to staff.

The Waste Champion Team meetings created a forum to engage with the cleaning staff, who are responsible for emptying smaller venue bins into the wheelie bins, as well as the facilities staff, who are responsible for taking the wheelie-bins from the waste collection areas to the waste room. In addition, the waste service providers could also voice their concerns. This allowed proactive solutions to issues of waste management, particularly before large exhibition and events.

The Waste Champions Team, through meeting frequently, also addressed challenges such as mixed waste in the risk kitchens, exhibition waste, and training and motivation of staff. As such, daily briefing sessions were implemented by the facilities manager and head chef during 2014. In addition, formal waste training was carried out in December 2014. In order to motivate staff, it was decided to include a quarterly "Waste Champion" prize, which was awarded to a staff member who, unawares, was captured disposing of waste correctly.

CTICC Clients are also continually encouraged to minimize their waste and to comply with the three-bin waste system. Recycling is included in the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) which are given to clients for exhibitions and conferences, and are charged separately for their waste removal. This encourages a reduction of waste from the clients' side, as well as subsidising the costs of recycling (as per the tables below), which otherwise would not be financially sustainable for the CTICC. Over and above the

SOPs, clients are given a Client Manual which contains information about the recycling system, and a sustainability Frequently Asked Questions document that covers the entire waste process, both front and back of house. Clients are also rewarded for their own efforts by receiving a recycling certificate from the CTICC which specifies the amount of waste which has been recycled after their event.

As the above has demonstrated, the CTICC implemented innovative solutions on the entire value-chain in order to address the issue of exhibition waste. As such, patrons were made aware of waste separation front-of-house; cleaning and facilities staff were able to fully understand and comply with the system back-of-house; waste room staff implemented a bar-coding system in order to accurately record waste; and clients were made aware of the waste system and given incentives in order to minimise their waste. These measures, collectively, resulted in the below diversion rates from landfill, as demonstrated in the following section.

## Results

Through effective stakeholder engagement across the value-chain, the CTICC managed to reduce its waste-to-landfill amount from with the amount of waste diverted from landfill over the last 3 years improving from 73% in 2012 to 25% in 2014.

	Recycling (tons)	Compost (tons)	Landfill (tons)	Total diverted (%)
2010/2011	100	0	298.7	25.5%
2011/2012	102.6	0	281.3	27%
2012/2013	126.6	4.1	309.8	29%
2013/2014	346	68	74.5	84.7%

Table 1 Diversion from Landfill (metric tons)

	Recycling and Waste Removal costs	Composting costs	Savings (Rebates + client contributions)	Savings as a % of costs
2011/2012	R88 6873.51	0	R39 7534.40	44.7 %
2012/2013	R86 7918.47	0	R38 7060.17	44.6 %
2013/2014	R94 4421.32	R51 320.50	R46 1032.39	46.3 %

Table 2 Cost Savings Achieved (South African Rand)

Whilst the centre pays more for the relevant recycling and composting services rendered than simply not recycling, the centre is able to make various cost-savings such as reducing landfill charges (which are likely to increase even more in the coming years) as well as gaining rebates for the high-quality recyclables provided. In addition, forming the Waste Champions Team provides an innovative solution which has various time cost-saving elements, as it allowed solutions to potential problems to be ironed out quickly. These factors, combined, have reduced the CTICC's environmental impacts, enhanced the clients' experience of the venue, as well as supported jobs through recycling and composting its waste.

As demonstrated above, the CTICC believes it deserves the recognition of the UFI Sustainable Development Award as it has successfully implemented innovative cost-saving in the value-chain, maximising sustainable development.

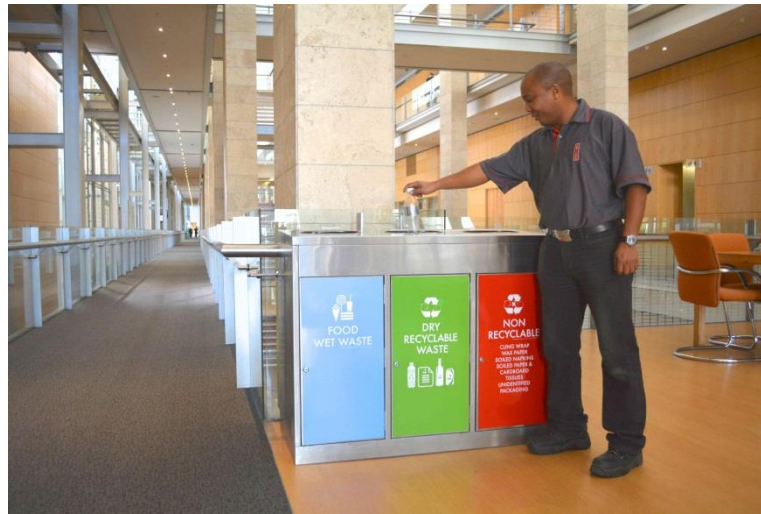


Figure 1 Front-of-house Recycling system



Figure 2 Back-of-house wheelie-bins and barcoding system

